

## VIRAL HEPATITIS

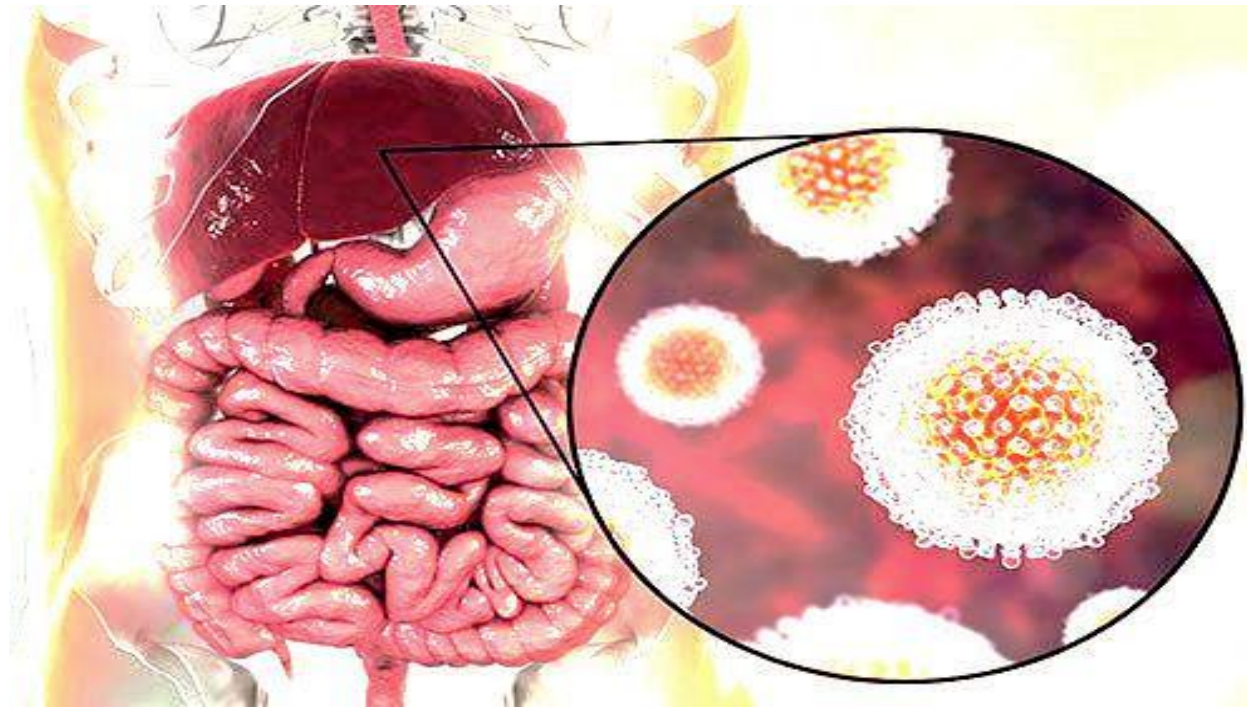
---

**Daniel Daudi Mkumbwa (MD 5, UDOM)**

**Viral Hepatitis** is the inflammation of the liver which is caused by the viral infections. This disease affects majority of people in the community due to lack of awareness to the people about this disease. The chronicity of symptoms differs from one patient to another as there are cases where a patient may be asymptomatic, hence makes it difficult to be detected at earlier stages. The **main types** of the viruses that cause hepatitis are **type A, B, C, D and E**. These five types are of greatest concern because they cause severe form of illness and can cause death. Also the above types have the potential risk to cause outbreak and an epidemic spread.



**WHO report on hepatitis**, focuses mainly on **hepatitis B and C which are responsible for about 96% of all hepatitis mortality**. Hepatitis has become a major health problem since more than 250 millions of people in the world live with hepatitis B or C infection and the number still increases despite of the measures taken by WHO to reduce new infection by 90% and reducing mortality by 65% in 2030. The increase in number of hepatitis cases are due to lack and poor awareness of the community, and poor vaccination strategies especially in developing countries. **The most affected group are young children, people who inject drugs (PWID), the men who perform anal sex, the prisoners, and the people living with HIV/AIDs**. Some people living with hepatitis show no symptoms so it is easier for them to infect others unknowingly and develop a serious liver infection.



**Viral hepatitis can be transmitted** from one person to another through fecal oral route, that means by ingesting the virus through the mouth and the virus can present in the fecal matter, **by the contact** of the **body fluids** like **saliva, semen, sperms, sweat**, from mother to child, etc. But bear in mind that all these depend on the type of the virus.

**My advice** is, everybody has to be aware of this disease. People should be **motivated to go and screen** for this disease so as to know their health status as soon as possible, and if they are infected, **treatment should be administered early**. This will enable possible precautions to be taken so as not to infect each other unknowingly. For those who are not infected they should receive an **appropriate vaccination** of viral hepatitis in order to reduce the risk of being affected by this disease. **The government should work together with health institutions, NGO's, and private sectors** so as to ensure people are screened and receive Hepatitis vaccination.

Management of hepatitis depends on the serostatus. For those who test negative they should ensure that they immediately receive three shots of vaccination for six months and check hepatitis B titre to be sure that they have built the required immunity. Those who test positive they should Consult their doctor immediately, avoid unprescribed drugs and be careful with unapproved herbal products. Hepatitis C has no vaccine, but it can be treated by using Direct Acting Antiviral tablet (DAA)

*Next article for the types of hepatitis will be released soon. Thank you for your time and please remember to take care and stay safe, COVID-19 is real.*

**References:**

*WHO Hepatitis annual report 2018, CDC annual epidemiological report 2017.*